

March 14, 2022

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXASBY: _____ CV _____
DEPUTY

Honorable Judge Albright,

First and foremost I pray this letter finds you and your family in the best health and highest spirits of the Lord. I also hope it gives you a deeper look at the man attached to the number. When I was first incarcerated in 2011 I was far from illiterate but when I look back at my old self the picture is so disturbing that some times it gives me chills. You can say that I was a product of my environment because I had a one track mind frame. I was so delusional that I believed I was destined to be a Drug Kingpin, I thought I would live a lavish lifestyle and go down as one of the Greats that escaped the system without having to face the consequences of my actions. I was quickly brought to reality from a fantasy and forced to see that what rappers and actors portray in movies and music videos was far fetched. I realized I would have to pay my debt to society and the sound of the gavel slamming down was like the gun shot that let you know the race has started.

Of course it took a few years for me to come up with this theory but I like to think that God gives all us the power and opportunity to turn curses into blessings. Once I let go of my childish ways and stop blaming others for the predicament I put myself in I came to the conclusion that I only had two options. I could either continue to cry over spilled milk and wither away or I can utilize this time and blossom so that when it was my time to re-enter society I would be so educated that success would be at my fingertips. I chose to elevate, change my way of thinking and become a different man that my family could be proud of. I spend countless hours attaining valuable knowledge and applying it in different

scenarios so that I never lose sight of the goals I'm chasing. I have completed multiple classes and courses, inside and outside of prison, I also have several projects old and new in the works that I am 90% positive will be successful upon my release. Motivational Speaker, movie scripts, novels, music, clothing lines and a handful of other business ventures. I am birthing these million dollar babies with a support system that is on steroids, they have and will continue to go above and beyond for me. Now I'm not going to act like there hasn't been bumps in the road on this journey that I am traveling because that would be unrealistic. But I can proudly say out of eleven years from state to Federal prison I only have four disciplinary cases. Two minors and two mediums that has distance between them, except for the last two and I don't feel like they are just but I accept full responsibility for my actions. A bunch of men with testosterone levels raging and egos bigger than Texas there is bound to be misunderstandings. For the most part I've diffused and downplayed all conflicts that came my way but unfortunately there were a couple I couldn't control. I've always been a leader so I take pride in not being a crash dummy or setting others up for failure. I am a firm believer in that life is 90% mental and 10% physical.

When I was young my Father would always tell me that when him and my mother departed from this world my siblings would need me the most. "You are the glue that will hold this family together so make sure you never lose your grip." A few years ago I witnessed first hand what he was trying to prepare me for when we lost my little brother Damien Hopkins Sr to a senseless act of gun violence. I come from a close knit family so we all were deeply affected by this traumatizing tragedy. Losing my little

brother rocked my soul to the core and did something to my spirit but once everyone seen how distraught my mother was they panicked. Without hesitation I naturally took up my role as the Backbone and consoled the rest of my family. (I still haven't had the proper time to concern the loss of my little brother Damian.) I felt the pain that we all were sharing but it all just seemed so unreal, especially to my mother because a parent is never suppose to bury their child. Family secrets is never supposed to be broadcast but I went you to understand the level of trauma we faced and how badly the devil was trying to destroy us. Shortly after my little brother's funeral I called home and received the news that my baby sister was rushed to the hospital for trying to commit suicide. Finally my solid exterior shattered I could no longer hold up the facade. I remember being on the phone crying like a baby in front of hardcore criminals begging my sister to keep fighting. "Think about mama, think about your kids, think about what it would do to me if I lost you while I'm in here." Hearing her cry her eyes out, telling me she can't live without Dami this shit hurts. The only thing I could do was promise her I was on my way to save her, hoping and praying that she weather the storm. Constant nightmares of hearing my mother's screams standing over my baby sister's lifeless body, waking up drenched in sweat fighting off the demons that were chasing me. On my knees 3 in the morning pleading with God begging for strength, asking why I always have to play strong in my times of weakness. As always He came through in a time of turmoil, lifted my spirit and spoke through me so that I could lift my family spirits. Held our hands through the rain and energized us with Sunshin. Once again I was on a mission to overcome another obstacle and try my best to turn a curse into a blessing because I understood life was bigger than me. My brother Damian left three sons behind that I now look at like mine.

plus I have two sons of my own. They all have extraordinary Queens as mothers including mine, I must tip my hat off to them because they go to the furthest extent and some to make sure they are well took care of. I glorify all single mothers who struggle to raise their children in broken homes wether its by force or choice. In my opinion though a boy needs a father figure to develop into a proper man because there are some things a woman cant teach them and some ways that a woman cant reach them. See I'm the cool/no nonsense Uncle, I'm the one my siblings depend on when its time to have difficult conversations and when it comes to different methods of discipline. But I'm also w/ my nephews and nieces seek approval from in their accomplishments and I'm the puppet they use to negotiate for extra privileges. On top of all of that parenthood is a little more complicated for me because the mother of my kids has Sickle Cell. Due to the medications she is prescribed and the unexpected trips to the hospital because of flare ups she is limited to physical interactions, even more now since the Pandemic has started. So you can see why it is important that I be reunited with my family as soon as possible. I can help lower the risk of her putting her life in danger on a daily basis and give my sons that extra push they need to help them secure their future. My presence is needed more now than ever while they are entering teenhood because this ^{is} around the time where peer pressure can lead you down the wrong path and change your life forever.

Before I go in detail about my medical history first let me say that I have family and friends that has been on the Front Lines since this Pandemic started. From having heart felt conversations after long strenuous hours I know that these times are physically, emotionally and mentally exhausting. I've had to encourage more than ^{one} of my people to talk to

a therapist and take a small break to rejuvenate their spirits. I salute everyone in the medical field that wakes up every morning to dedicate their lives to the well being of others and my heart goes out to them.

As far as my medical status the black and white is stating facts not opinions, I've been having back problems since 2016. It started as a Sciatica Nerve type of pain radiating from my lower back all the way down my right leg. Over the years my health has continued to decline to the point where my back will lock up two to three days at a time. The symptoms are always the same depending on the pain level, urinating and defecating on myself, pain while using the bathroom, numbness in my legs, dizziness, cold sweats and loss of balance. The remedies are always the same, ice packs, hot towels, pain pills, and shots. In the beginning a X-Ray revealed that I had minor arthritis and disc bulging, later on down the line my first MRI revealed that I had DDD (Degenerative Disc Disease) on top of the other problems. The last time my back locked up it was the worst, the pain was so excruciating I tried to deflect the pain by leaning to the opposite side, which lead to the left side of my hips ^{being} caved in as it still is now, because of it being the weekend I didn't receive medical attention until Monday. After my second MRI I was sent to discuss the results with a Neurosurgeon at Semmes Murphy Clinic located in Memphis, TN. He informed that it looked like I had something called Hematoma, which usually unswells on its on and the reason my hips were all jacked up was because my body is naturally fighting off the pain. I was scheduled for another MRI in three months, when I returned I was told the swelling did not decrease not even a inch (golf ball size) so it was no way possible that it could be Hematoma. It was labeled as a Piro Spinal Mx so I would

need a CT scan and a biopsy before we know what the next step is but I need to prepare myself mentally for surgery. Plus I was told that most likely I would at least need a couple years of physical therapy (which is impossible in prison) because its a high probability that this Para Spinal Mass has nothing to do with my hips and the numbness in my legs. Now I'm waiting to go through the process of being transferred back and forward to the hospital but I don't understand why I am being subjected to endure more pain instead of being admitted to the hospital. For almost nine months I have been forced to embrace extreme levels of pain on a daily basis. If I stand up for more than 15 minutes my legs go numb and I get dizzy to the point were it feels like I'm going to collapse from exhaustion. No matter how I try to lay, every night I have to toss and turn wrestling with pain until I eventually pass out. I'm afraid if things continue to move in this direction in the near future I may be paralyzed. I am one of the many inmates that is in the process of filing suit (one I don't plan to pursue) against Forrest City Medical Department for the violation of my Eighth Amendment Constitutional Right. What I find frightening is that my cries for help wasn't took serious until I went through the motions of filing the proper paper work. I'm not going to say that I was totally ignored because that would be a lie but I was looked at like I was overreacting until something serious was found. It's ridiculous that I had to go through these measures for someone to make my health a priority and to be quite honest it hasn't make that big of a difference. (Is nine months being to impatient Your Honor?) Basically I believe that when you stand on principals, morals and values as a decent God fearing human being it is your duty to step up and speak out when you are being overwhelmed. Especially when you hold a patients life, better yet another human beings life in your hands.

As much as I hate to admit ^{it} I am getting old in an environment where this new generation of youngsters are high off God knows what and lawless. They don't care who they victimize so anyone is viewed as a target as long as they don't put up too much resistance, a handicap person has become perfect prey. After all this talking I am faced with the same two questions that has haunted me for years. Why do I always have to play strong in my times of weakness? Who's going to be strong for me?

I am still far from perfect but I have rehabilitated and elevated myself to a level that majority of the people from my childhood wouldn't even recognize me if they were staring in my face. When I was physically free I was mentally incarcerated now that I am mentally free everyday I strive for greatness. Your Honor now that you have a better view of the man attached to the number ⁶ I am humbly asking and praying that you grant me Compassionate Release. Allow me the chance to get the proper medical care that I need, redeem myself and undo some of the destruction I caused by helping break the cycle that has poisoned my community for far too long. I know that you are a busy man so I appreciate it greatly for blessing me with time to speak my peace.

LOVE PEACE HAPPINESS

Shelton B. Hopkins II

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3/9/22

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LEGAL MAIL

